

**TESTIMONY OF HARRY WU,
EXEC. DIRECTOR OF THE LAOGAI RESEARCH FOUNDATION
ON ORGAN TRAFFICKING BY THE CHINESE COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT
before the
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE AND
GOVERNMENT REFORM & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
of the
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

June 16, 1998

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee it is an honor to be able to appear before you again to discuss this important subject. You have heard much this afternoon about Chinese transplant organs and where they come from. Before I begin my testimony, I would like to share with you a few images that will attach some human faces back on to this technical discussion. [SHOW SLIDES]

In China, a majority of the organs used in transplant operations come from executed prisoners. China, as you have heard, is the number one country in the world in terms of executing people. It has been first place in this grim category for many years. Standard procedure for executions in China involves a bullet in the back. 'Barbaric' is the best word I can think of to describe execution in China. These two men were executed near Chengdu in 1989. Since these executions, many thousands of other Chinese have met with similar deaths. It is difficult to say how many of these people had their organs removed. Finding evidence that the practice exists is easy.

When I appeared before these committees two weeks ago, Chairman Gilman asked me to provide further details about a Chinese doctor I met in Europe who told me that he had been participated in the removal of organs from a prisoner *before his* execution. I am happy to now share with you the details of my encounters with this doctor:

When I was in Germany in 1992, I happened to make the acquaintance of a Chinese surgeon named Chen Miao, who graduated from the Huaxi University of Medical Sciences. (ATTACHMENT 1) Huaxi University is located in the Chinese city of Chengdu, which is the capital of Sichuan Province.

Dr. Chen told me that late one night in March of 1986 he received a call from the Communist Party Committee of his hospital with orders to travel with three other surgeons to prison in the Sichuan Province county of Xindu. Dr. Chen told me that, at this prison, he and the other surgeons removed two kidneys from a living prisoner. The removed kidneys were then transported by a Chinese military helicopter to the hospital at Huaxi University, where they were immediately transplanted into the body of a waiting patient. Dr. Chen said he heard the patient was a high-ranking Communist Party cadre.

Dr. **Chen** said he **was** told that the kidney-less prisoner would be executed the following morning. Dr. **Chen** said he and the other doctors in the surgical team were **told** the procedure was a “political task” and that they were strictly forbidden to talk about their **involvement**.

The removal of two kidneys **from** a living human being is more than a violation of the various medical codes of ethics. It is murder. I think Dr. **Chen** displayed considerable bravery by telling his story to me.

I, in turn, wanted to **verify** the truth of Dr. **Chen’s** story myself. In 1994, BBC reporter Sue Lloyd Roberts and I made an extensive trip through China to follow up a variety of leads like the one provided to me by Dr. **Chen** and turn them into a BBC documentary report. After airing in October of 1995, this report earned Ms. Lloyd Roberts an **investigative** journalism award **from** Amnesty International.

Ms. Lloyd Roberts and I spent a day in April of 1994 at Huaxi University **of Medical Sciences**. (**ATTACHEMENT 2**) There we posed as two wealthy **foreigners** interested in arranging a kidney transplant for a sick relative. The **staff at** the Huaxi University hospital were more than happy to talk with us. They showed us around the ward where transplant patients receive dialysis treatments as they await transplant operations and allowed us to speak with several patients who had recently received transplant organs **from** executed prisoners. Explaining that I wanted my sick relative to be able to see these facilities and people, I openly took photographs inside the hospital. (**ATTACHMENTS 3-7**)

Remembering that Dr. **Chen** had told me the organs he helped extract were transported to this hospital by helicopter, I asked a member of the hospital staff where a helicopter bearing organs for transplant would land. **I** was shown to an open area of ground behind the hospital_ (**ATTACHMENT 8**)

In August of **1994**, Ms. Lloyd Roberts accompanied me to a second interview with Dr. **Chen**—**this** time at his home in Hamburg. (**ATTACHMENT 9**) **At this** meeting he looked at the photos we had taken on the grounds of the Huaxi Medical University and he **confirmed** that this was the same **facility** he had been working at when he was called to remove those kidneys **from** a that live prisoner.

During this 1994 visit, I asked **him**: “How did you know he was going to be executed?” He **replied**: ‘We were told. We asked, ‘how was the guy going to live **if he** had no kidneys?’ and we were told that he was going to be executed the next day.”

‘How **were** you told?’ I asked **him**. “We were told by the doctors,” said Dr. **Chen** “After **all**, it was a two hour drive [to the prison] and we had nothing else to talk about.”

Chairman **Gilman**, I am glad you asked me at the last hearing to tell you about Dr. Chen today, To tell you the **truth**, over the past year or so of working on other aspects of this organs issue-I had almost forgotten about **him**.

The truth is that the mountain of reports and evidence documenting the Chinese government’s systematic practice of harvesting organs **from** the prisoners it executes has grown so **large** that Dr. Chen’s account amounts to little more than a **footnote** in the bibliography of Chinese organ harvesting that the Laogai Research Foundation has

accumulated. **(ATTACHMENT 10)** I sincerely encourage anyone **who** says there is not **enough** evidence to confirm that the practice exists to look at this bibliography.

I think that anyone who reads these materials will have to agree with me-that the problem of **government**-backed organ harvesting has existed **for** years in China and persists today. The BBC has reported on this. So has NBC, ABC and the Canadian Broadcasting Company. And the media aren't the only ones who are trying to get to the bottom of this practice. As most of you know, the **FBI** arrested two Chinese citizens in New York this past February on charges that they were trying to sell organs **from** executed Chinese prisoners. The evidence is extensive, it is available in the mainstream of society and it continues to accumulate.

I am glad to have an opportunity to share these materials with you. It gives me a chance to look back on them as I prepare to move **forward** with new investigations in this area. Bringing the facts about this **horrible** practice of the Chinese **government has been a** long and **difficult** process, but there have been **significant** rewards.

One of these rewards has been to force the Chinese government into a grudging admission that human organs are indeed harvested **from** the bodies of executed prisoners. Now they draw the line at organ "sales" and state that **consent is** obtained either **from** the prisoners whose organs are taken, or **from** their **family** members.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committees, **if I** can leave you with one thought today, let it be this: the notion of **condemned** men and women **freely consenting** to give up their organs is the ugliest kind of joke a government can play on its people.

Even **if the** Chinese were to make the process by which it obtains such consent completely open to the international community, it would still not change the fact that it makes a mockery of medical ethics standards set up in the wake of Nazi experiments at the Nuremberg Trials,

In closing, let me quote to you **from** the 'Ruling on consent of prisoners in the Nuremberg Trials.'

"None of the victims of the atrocities perpetrated by those defendants were **volunteers**, and this is true regardless of what these unfortunate people may have said or signed before their torture began. Most of the victims had not been condemned to death, and those who had been were not **criminals.... Whatever** book or treatise on medical ethics we may examine, and whatever expert on forensic medicine we may question, **will** say that it is a **fundamental** and inescapable obligation of every physician under any known system of law not to perform a dangerous experiment without the subject's **consent. In** the **tyranny that was Nazi Germany, no one could give such a consent to the medical agents of the State; everyone lived in fear and acted under duress.**" (ATTACHMENT 1 I)

In China today, any prisoner who is asked to consent to donation of his or her organs **after** execution is **under** similar duress. If everyone agrees **that** people being murdered for

their body parts is one of the grossest violations of human rights imaginable, the only question left is this:

What are we-as fellow human beings-going to do about it?

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I will be happy to answer any questions members of the committee may have.